REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on May 16, 2006. Applicants

gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter (including claims 6, 7, and 12-

17) in this application. Claim 12 is rewritten in independent form. Claim 1 is amended to

incorporate the recitations of claims 4 and 6. Claims 4-7 are accordingly cancelled, without

prejudice. Claim 8-11, 19, and 20 are likewise cancelled, without prejudice. No new matter is

introduced by this Amendment. Entry of this Amendment – in order to place the application into

condition for allowance or into better condition for appeal – is earnestly solicited. With this

Amendment, claims 1, 2, and 12-18 are pending in the application.

Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 as failing

to define the invention properly. Claim 19 is cancelled, and claim 18 is amended to obviate this

rejection as stated by the Examiner.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S.

2003/0054288 A1 to Shimada et al. Claims 4, 5, 8, 9, and 20 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a)

as being unpatentable over Shimada et al. in view of US 6,599,674 B1 to Kawamura et al.

Claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimada et al.

in view of US 4,365,018 to Crutchfield et al. Claim 19 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Shimada et al in view of Kawamura et al. and Crutchfield et al. The

Examiner had kindly indicated that claims 6, 7, 12, 14, and 16 are allowable and that claims 13,

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15, and 17 are allowed. Claim 18 was not rejected over the prior art. Accordingly, the present

Amendment limits the claims herein to allowable subject matter. It is respectfully submitted that

none of these prior art references - alone or in combination - teaches or renders obvious the

presently claimed invention.

If there are any issues remaining, the Examiner is invited to telephone Richard Gallagher,

Registration No. 28,781, at (703) 205-8008, in order to resolve them.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies

to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional

fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: October 16, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By

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